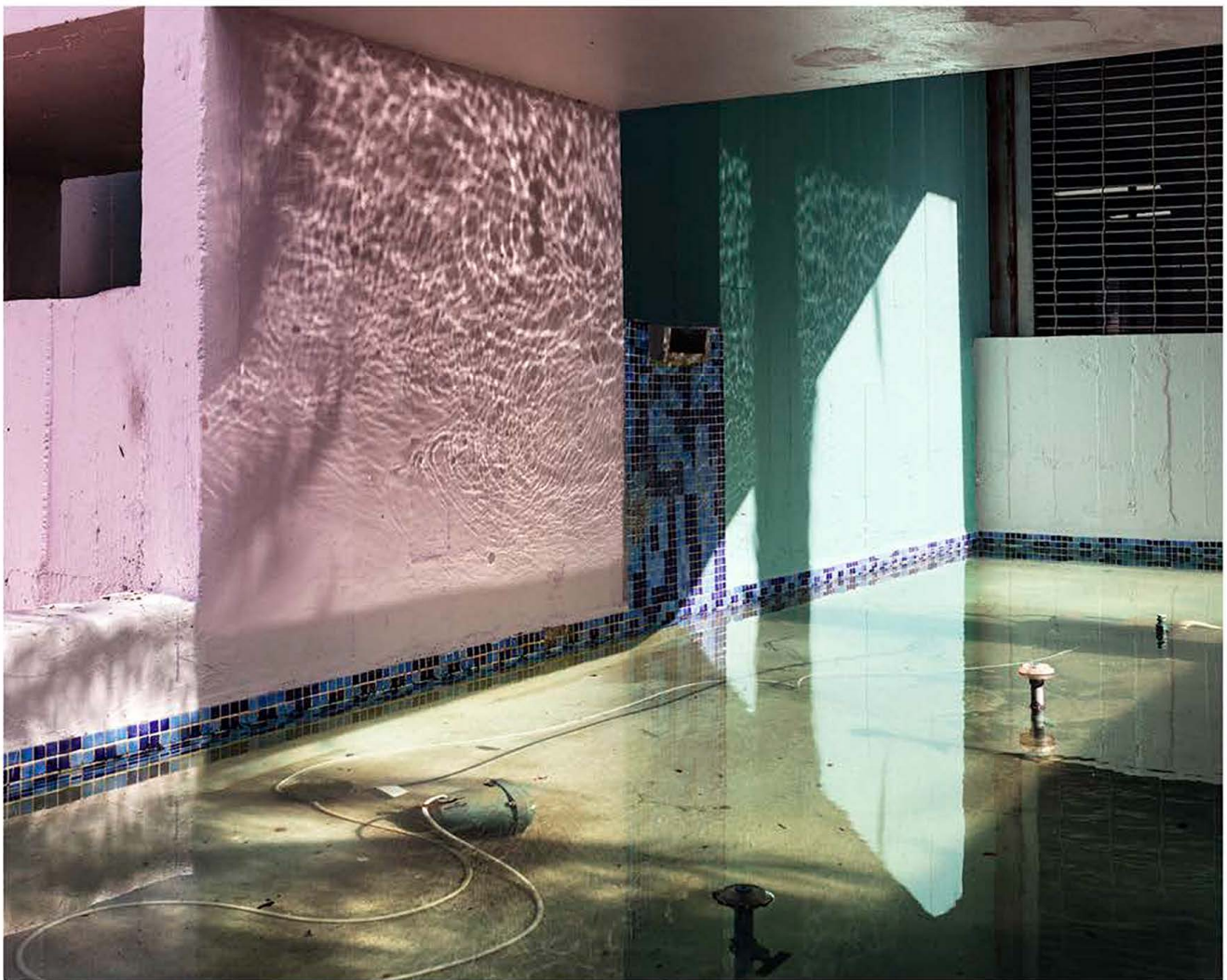


ART

## A Photographer's Quiet Reflections on Climate Change

*Floodzone*, an ongoing series by Anastasia Samoylova, stirringly acknowledges that the climate crisis is already upon us, however earnestly we might resist this fact.

Ade J. Omotosho September 4, 2020



Anastasia Samoylova, "Fountain" (2017), dye-sublimation print on aluminum, 40 x 50 inches (all images courtesy the artist)

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MIAMI — A certain species of image is endemic to Miami. Sparkling beaches, tall palms, metallic high rises. And the sea, always vast, impressive. How vigorously these images bloom in the mind. But a sense of loss withers this idealism: rising sea levels, gentrification, and environmental destruction.

This tension is remarkably encased in *FloodZone*, an exhibition of photographs by Anastasia Samoylova, now on view at Dotfiftyone Gallery in Miami. Drawn from her ongoing series of the same name, these works were also published by Steidl in a handsome monograph this year. Samoylova began the project in 2016, goaded on by the blistering heat of that summer, with an aim to register the acute effects of climate change in her adopted hometown of Miami. Her scope has since expanded to include cities throughout the US South.

The photographs glimmer with portent. In “Pool After Hurricane” (2017), a crush of leaves dawdles on the surface of a clear pool like so many arabesques decorating a carpet. Scattered there, they tell of a surly, blighting wind, but the image speaks in subtle tones: laconic, spare, sibylline. There are flashes of bright dereliction. A pump motor snakes along the bottom of an old fountain, in the eponymous image from 2017, logged with stagnant water. A bar of refracted light seems to beam out of the frame — the picture shot through with Samoylova’s keen sensitivity to space, which lends the composition great depth and texture. There is stirring bleakness, too. Samoylova’s son wades through ankle-deep waters in “Flooded Garage” (2017), helmet fastened to his head as though it were some talisman against drowning.

# HYPERALLERGIC

The most extraordinary photographs are those animated by Samoylova’s preoccupation with the chasm between the real and the artificial. We encounter these scenes again and again. “Camouflage” (2017), shows a printed banner of verdant foliage set against a chain-link fence, beyond which stand trees that rhyme with the image before them. These pictures evoke Luigi Ghirri’s wit in their depictions of capitalism’s brash encroachment on a landscape rapidly eroding.

Samoylova’s method is not didactic, nor does it strike a note of admonishment. Instead, it draws its energy from a quiet recognition that the climate crisis is already, implacably, upon us, however earnestly the mind might resist this fact.



Anastasia Samoylova, “Square Lake” (2018), archival pigment print, dye-sublimation print on aluminum

*Anastasia Samoylova: FloodZone continues through September 14 at Dot Fiftyone Gallery (7275 NE 4th Ave, Miami, FL), open by appointment. The exhibition was curated by Verónica Flom, and can be explored virtually [here](#).*

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